

New Fiction

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ages to "pick up" a typist girl in the park and proposes to marry her. The rest do nothing, but think; always about themselves, as each is completely self-centered. Sir Harold, who has hitherto been regarded as a solid institution, like the bank, does manage to lose his money and the family is reduced to comparative poverty. But it is quite evident that they will be unhappy and sing as plaintively under the new circumstances as when they kept six maids and a chauffeur. The book is very earnestly pretentious—about very little.

THE MAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE. By Henry James Forman. Little, Brown & Co. INTO the quiet life of Randolph Byrd, lover of rare books, come the three children of his dead sister, whose husband had deserted her some years before her death. The children upset Randolph's calm existence and cause the postponement of his impending marriage to Gertrude Bayard. Many of Byrd's old habits have to be given up and—greatest change of all—he has to go to work in order to increase his income to pay the children's constantly increasing bills.

At first the niece and nephews thus thrust into Byrd's life seem a nuisance, but eventually they come to mean much to him. Also there is Alicia, the "mother's helper" who had helped look after the children, who comes with them to Byrd's house. Gradually Byrd readjusts his life and after a disastrous business experience in Wall Street he is able to earn a comfortable living for himself and his wards. So fond does he become of the latter that when their worthless father—Jim Pendleton—returns to claim them he refuses to give up the children and bribes Pendleton to go away. Alicia, too, wins as the years go on a place closer and closer to Randolph's heart, and it is for love of her that he refuses Gertrude Bayard when Gertrude proposes to him in a modern manner.

"The Man Who Lived in a Shoe" tells the story of how Randolph Byrd raised the three orphans—Jimmy, Laura and Randolph—and helped them find their places in the world.

Mr. Forman has written a quiet, pleasant tale in "The Man Who Lived in a Shoe." The chief characters are attractive, nice people, no mention of whom would be complete without including Griselda, Byrd's faithful maid servant, and Diddin, a gruff explorer who had always loved Laura Pendleton, mother of the Pendleton brood.

THE EVIL SHEPHERD. By E. Phillips Oppenheim. Little, Brown & Co.

THE singular thing about Mr. Oppenheim is not so much his enormous output or even the fertility of imagination, the diversity of incident and variety in his plots as the fact that in spite of their standardizations these stories do not produce the impression of being machine made. One feels, too, that he enjoys doing them, which is no doubt one reason why the reader enjoys reading them. This newest story, which follows within a few months upon its predecessor's heels, is carefully made, with a very elaborate plot. Unlike "The Great Prince Shan" it has no purpose beyond entertainment; it is thoroughly a mystery, detective story with an abundance of thrilling event and a surprise at the end. It is hung upon the investigations of a London barrister, aged 35, into various crimes, which become complicated with his own love affairs. But the chief figure is the father of Margaret, the very rich and very queer oldish man (of about 50) Sir Timothy Brast, who is supposed to be an arch criminal—at least Ledsam, the barrister, suspects him. It begins with a murder case in which Ledsam has just secured an acquittal. He then learns that his client was guilty, the information being given by the criminal's wife, Margaret. Then this guilty but acquitted murderer is himself killed, and Ledsam suspects Margaret, though he has fallen in love with her. That is only the beginning of the trouble, but it is enough to record as an appetizer. It is not quite Oppenheim at his best, but it is a very well made story of its kind.

THE CAVE WOMAN. By Norval Richardson. Charles Scribner's Sons.

MR. RICHARDSON has a fine knack in managing bizarre situations and dealing with astonishing human beings in such way that one accepts them unquestionably. This is the story of a fe-

male monstrosity, who is certainly unlike the ordinary modern woman, but who is in no way impossible or grotesque. She is the unqualified vulgarian; simple, direct in her method, serenely going after the thing she wants and getting it. She is beautiful, physically, except for coarse, unfeeling hands; "virile" and passionate, but calmly determined in her strength. When she happens upon John Hogarth, the poor and unsuccessful author, living on the island of Capri with his lovely and much loved wife and a small invalid daughter, the "cave woman" decides she wants him. And eventually she gets him, partly by savage intrigue and partly by accident.

When Hogarth thinks his wife Antonia is drowned he finally consents to marry the virile Mary, who has simply and directly asked him to do so because she loves him. He is actuated, however, by the desire to save his sick daughter, as Mary is immensely wealthy and is willing to do all possible for the child. In fact, Mary manages to buy him, and even believes she has bought love. Then after twelve years comes the disclosure, which the reader, of course, has anticipated, that Antonia is not really dead. The reasons for her disappearance are plausibly explained, and her silence is due to her love for the child. How they finally get out of the tragic mess must be left to the reader to learn; it is somewhat conventional in mechanism, but there is nothing crude about it—a genuinely tragic curtain for the thing. And the "cave woman" is certainly a striking, unusually interesting and finely presented character.

MY LADY APRIL. By James Overton. Frederick A. Stokes Company.

A SPIRITED tale of eighteenth century love and adventure. In the days when Beau Nash's word was law at Bath, Sir George Forrest and his wife ran there a genteel gambling establishment. But Sir George and his wife made debts faster than money; the bailiffs appeared; Sir George escaped to London and Lady Forrest ran away with her admirer, Cassilis. Behind them at Bath they left their daughter Dorothy. "The soft light of the candles shone like an aureole in her glimmering hair; her eyes were shadowy under their veil of thick lashes; her rosy gown seemed almost to radiate light. He could not believe that she was painted."

Dorothy faces the music of her parents' debts. Merodach, the champion prize fighter of the day, has been kidnapped just before his biggest bout, his captors intending to hold him until the fight is over and the bets of Merodach's backers forfeited. Dorothy rescues Merodach, who appears in the nick of time at the ring-side and knocks out his opponent. The men who have won money on Merodach present Dorothy with money to take her to her aunt's distant home, but she uses it to pay a debt of her parents, and goes to live with a Mrs. Bradley of questionable repute.

From Mrs. Bradley's Dorothy is rescued by Ralph Carew and carried off to her aunt's—as she supposes. In reality they are headed for London. Merodach, the prize fighter, intervenes, and Merodach, Dorothy and Ralph Carew start on foot for the home of Dorothy's aunt.

That conveys the flavor of an Old World tale that is gracefully if somewhat conventionally told.

NICOLETTE. A Tale of Old Provence. By Baroness Orczy. George H. Doran Company.

A WHOLESOMELY romantic story in a beautiful setting of Old Provence. The date is the restoration period of French history, and the action plays itself out between a half ruined old castle, the home of the proud but impoverished Ventadour family, and the comfortable farmhouse owned by Jaume Deydier, descendant of a one time valet to the Count. But Deydier is now wealthy and the Ventadours are poor. Nicolette, Deydier's little girl, is brought up with Bertrand, the last Count of Ventadour, and his crippled sister. Over the happy childhood days lies the black shadow of the old Countess. Bertrand's grandmother, cruel, hard, living only for the sake of family pride and family tradition.

She parts the happy children, sends Bertrand to St. Cyr, and arranges a betrothal with a rich young relative. Rixende is beautiful, but shallow and selfish. Bertrand loves her and is crushed and humiliated when she finally throws him over. But at the last Nicolette's unselfish devo-

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THE OLD HOUSE

By Cécile Tormay

This novel, the first to come from Hungary in many years, is an impressive picture of life in Buda and Pest seventy years ago. Although a first book, it has had both an artistic and popular success upon the Continent and has been translated into five languages. "A distinguished and beautiful work of fiction," Burton Rascoe in *The New York Tribune*. "We feel its reality as a vivid thing," *The Boston Transcript*. "Nobly written," *The Kansas City Journal*. "A work of a very high order," *The New York Herald*. \$2 net

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By H. de Vere Stacpoole

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